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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 6022
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3716
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3575
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 4264
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
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RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
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SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: 2009 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: STATE 109980

¶1. The following paragraph is Embassy Ashgabat's submission for the 2009 country terrorism report (reftel).

¶2. Since the September 2008 violence in Ashgabat's Khitrovka neighborhood, the Turkmenistan Government has not reported any other violent incidents. The government maintains a military-style counterterrorism unit said to have hostage rescue and explosives threat management capability, as well as a Department for the Prevention of Terrorism and Organized Crime in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In May 2009, the Turkmenistan Government passed an Anti-Money Laundering and Counterterrorism Financing Law, which went into effect in August 2009. This law supposedly created a new state agency to collect information and uncover suspicious transactions. Although Turkmenistan's law enforcement and security agencies exerted stringent control over society, Turkmenistan's border guards, customs services, and law enforcement were small in size and uneven in quality. The government strictly controlled access into and passage through Turkmenistan at official border crossings and along main roads, but clandestine passage was still possible due to long and porous borders that stretch across mountain and desert terrain. The U.S. Government worked with the Turkmen authorities to improve the quality of border checkpoints; in October 2009 the U.S. opened a new checkpoint at Farap on the border with Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan Government officials have met with U.S. Government counterterrorism experts and are expected to participate in training in early 2010 in critical incident management. They have also expressed interest in additional future training. With continued cooperation to equalize the quality of law enforcement throughout the country, the potential for Turkmenistan to be used as a safe haven for terrorists would decrease.

¶3. The Embassy Ashgabat point of contact for the 2009 country terrorism report is Political Officer Sarah Manaker. Telephone number: (993-12) 35-00-45 x 2167. Email: manakersv@state.gov.
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